

Proposed New Proviso

Patient-to-Physician Telemedicine Pilot Project for Medicaid Enrollees

Representative Andy Patrick

Representative Bill Herbkersman

Subcommittee Action February 7, 2012: Adjourn Debate

21. __. (DHHS: Patient-to-Physician Telemedicine Pilot Project for Medicaid Enrollees) The Department of Health and Human Services, during Fiscal Year 2012-2013, within the funds appropriated, shall pilot test a patient-to-physician telemedicine system. The department shall utilize no fewer than \$500,000 to implement this program. The maximum amount of funds that may be used annually for the program is \$1,400,000.

The purpose of the program is to reduce the number of emergency room visits in nonemergency cases and to evaluate the effectiveness of telemedicine technology and services in reducing costs and improving access to care for nonemergent medical issues.

The pilot test must include a statistically valid sample of Medicaid enrollees within the counties as determined by the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, but shall include no less than 10,000 enrollees per month.

The patient-to-physician telemedicine system must have or be:

- (1) open twenty-four hours a day, three hundred sixty-five days a year;
- (2) all call center(s) locations and staff located in South Carolina;
- (3) all physician(s) located in South Carolina, licensed to practice in South Carolina and be certified by the American Board of Family Medicine;
- (4) on call availability of a South Carolina licensed physician, twenty-four hours, seven days a week to triage care, coordinate treatment with the Medicaid enrollee's primary care physician, and provide treatment to the Medicaid enrollee;
- (5) daily monitoring of communications with the call center;
- (6) fully HIPAA compliant;
- (7) procedures to ensure that a caller will never receive a busy signal or voice mail when accessing the telemedicine line;
- (8) a call center follow-up call to the enrollee within 5 days of their initial call to ensure that their medical issue was satisfactorily addressed; and,
- (9) approved by the South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners to provide telemedicine services in South Carolina.

The department shall select one or more managed care organizations (MCO) or medical home networks (MHN) to implement the pilot program. The pilot program must be conducted for minimum of 180 days and must commence no later than August 1, 2012. The department, in developing and administering this program, is authorized to take such actions as may be required, including making requests for Medicaid waivers when necessary and contracting with a third-party provider or vendor to furnish and operate the patient-to-physician telemedicine system.

Each participating MCO and MHN shall report its findings to the department within 30 days of the conclusion of the pilot program in a form and manner as determined by the department. The department shall submit a report compiling and analyzing these findings to the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee within 90 days of the conclusion of the pilot project.